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Bronx educators accused of racism still under investigation, still on payroll

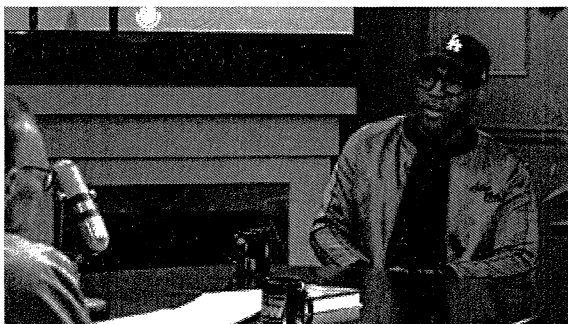


By BEN CHAPMAN JUL 09, 2018 | 5:00 PM



Patricia Cummings, social studies teacher at Middle School 118, stepped on students' backs to show what slavery was like. (Andrew Savulich / New York Daily News)

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City Department of Education officials have failed to conclude investigations of two Bronx educators accused of racist acts roughly five months after launching their probes — and both educators still have their jobs, the agency said Monday.

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by Taboola

On Feb. 1, the Daily News broke the story of Middle School 118 teacher Patricia Cummings, who sparked outrage around the globe after students and teachers reported that she singled out black students and told them to lie on the floor for a January lesson on the slave trade — and then stepped on their backs to show them what slavery felt like.

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Cummings was reassigned to the rubber room after the allegations against her went public but she's still on the city payroll and could return to the classroom when classes resume in September.

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Intermediate School 224 Principal Patricia Catania was accused of barring Black History Month lessons. (LinkedIn)

Likewise, Middle School 224 principal Patricia Catania remains on the job — and has retained her leadership position at the school — while investigators probe allegations that she barred Black History Month lessons and confiscated a

student-made poster celebrating the trailblazing African American singer and actress Lena Horne.

MS 224 teacher Mercedes Liriano, who first reported the accusations against Catania, said that investigators visited the school 49 times since the News broke the story of the controversy at her school on February 10.

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“We all cannot believe that the DOE has dragged this out,” Liriano said. “After all we have gone through this school year with such bad leadership, this shows that the DOE doesn’t really care.”

The two cases were part of a series of News stories on accusations of racism in city schools that prompted demonstrations around the city, prompting Mayor de Blasio to set aside \$23 million for anti-bias training for city educators in April.



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Teacher Mercedes Liriano speaks at a rally outside Intermediate School 224 in the Bronx on Feb. 15.. (Gardiner Anderson for New York Daily News)

Catania, 49, a 26-year veteran of city schools who has an otherwise clean disciplinary record and earns \$154,257 a year, didn’t respond to a request for comment.

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Cummings, 37, who’s worked in city schools since 2006 and earns \$68,934, didn’t respond to a request for comment either.

Education Department officials said that probes of the kind facing Catania and Cummings may take up to several months to complete.

Department spokesman Douglas Cohen said that city investigators are still working both cases.

“Information about the allegations is being thoroughly gathered and reviewed so these cases can be concluded fairly and appropriately,” Cohen said. “We take these allegations seriously and will ensure any necessary follow-up action is swiftly taken based on the findings of the investigations.”

Topics: Educators, Middle Schools



Ben Chapman

Education Reporter

CONTACT



Ben Chapman is an award-winning reporter who covers education for the New York Daily News. A graduate of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, Chapman has written more than 2,000 articles about New York City schools for the Daily News since joining the paper in 2009.



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DAILY NEWS NYDailyNews.com

Race-flap educators not slapped

BY BEN CHAPMAN
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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LINKEDIN

Patricia Catania

room after the allegations against her went public but she's still on the city payroll and could return to the classroom when classes resume in September.

Likewise, Middle School 224 principal Patricia Catania remains on the job — and has retained her leadership position at the school — while investigators probe allegations that she barred Black History



ANDREW SAVULICH/DAILY NEWS

Patricia Cummings

Month lessons and confiscated a student-made poster celebrating the trailblazing African-American singer and actress Lena Horne.

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DEATH NOTICES

The New York Daily News extends condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have passed.

212-210-2111

Death Notices

Kelly, Larry

Kelly, Larry born in Laurencetown, Co. Galway, Ireland passed away on July 7, 2018. Retired from Local 608 Carpenter's Union. Beloved Husband of Mary (nee Brennan). Loving father of Larry Kelly (Mary), Ann Kelly, Margaret Kelly, Joan McLean (John), Eileen Kelly. Cherished grandfather of 7. Reposing at Denis S. O'Connor FH 91-05 Beach Channel Drive, Rockaway Beach, NY 11693. Viewing Tuesday July 10, 2018 from 2-5 and 7-9pm. Funeral Mass Wednesday 9:30am At St. Thomas More Church in Breezy Point, NY. Interment St. John's Cemetery.

Please sign guestbook on obituaries.nydailynews.com

Hebling, Audrey J.

Audrey J. "Doc" Hebling, of Bellerose, on June 18, 2018. Formerly employed by Sperry Gyroscope Corp., in the development & research department and then became a physics teacher at L.I. Lutheran High School, Brookville in 1995. She is survived by many loving friends and students.

Visitation will be at the ROSLYN HEIGHTS FUNERAL HOME 75 Mineola Ave., Roslyn Heights on Thursday, July 12 from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m.. Funeral mass at St. Gregory

'50s heartthrob, 'Damn Yankees' star Hunter dies

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